



WASHINGTON STATE  
**CRIMINAL JUSTICE TRAINING COMMISSION**  
19010 1<sup>ST</sup> AVENUE SOUTH, BURIEN, WA 98148

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**SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday, February 23, 2012  
8 AM to 4 PM

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jeff Myers (Chair), Chief, Hoquiam Police Department  
Bill Elfo (Vice Chair), Sheriff, Whatcom County  
Darell Stidham, Deputy, Spokane County Sheriff's Office  
Garry Lucas, Sheriff, Clark County  
Josh Kelsey, Officer, Lynnwood Police Department  
Julie Anderson, Auditor, Pierce County  
Ken Hohenberg, Chief, Kennewick Police Department  
Laura Laughlin, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Ned Newlin, Chief of Corrections, Kitsap County Sheriff's Office  
Tom Metzger, Prosecuting Attorney, Pend Oreille County

**WSCJTC STAFF PRESENT:**

Cory Ahrens, Project Manager, Telecommunicator Program  
Greg Baxter, Manager, Human Resources  
Joel Gavino, Manager, Information Technology  
John Suessman, Commander, Basic Law Enforcement Academy  
Pam Clark, Commander, Corrections Division  
Rachelle Heinzen, Assistant Commander, Basic Law Enforcement Academy  
Rachelle Parslow, Program Administrator, MIDD CIT-King Co.  
Sonja Hirsch, Executive Assistant  
Steve Lettic, Assistant Director  
Tisha Ehret, Manager, Certification  
Tony Anderman, Manager, Advanced Training  
Victoria Mathews, Administrative Assistant, Telecommunicator Program  
Wes Anderson, Manager, Facilities

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Jean E. Meyn, Assistant Attorney General, Attorney General's Office  
Linda Byron and cameraman, King 5 News

## **INTRODUCTION**

**The Chair** called the meeting to order at 8:09 AM with a quorum present. Sonja Hirsch conducted roll call to identify the Commissioners present.

**The Chair** asked for a moment of silence for the Washington State trooper who was killed in the line of duty in Kitsap County earlier in the morning.

**The Chair** recognized the two new Commissioners: Commissioner Lucas and Commissioner Hohenberg.

**Commissioner Lucas** added that he has been the Sheriff of Clark County for 22 years and has been in law enforcement for 45 years. He has served two previous terms as a Commissioner of the WSCJTC.

**Commissioner Hohenberg** added that he has been in law enforcement for 34 years and has served as the Chief of Kennewick PD for the past nine years.

## **PURPOSE**

The Commissioners will interview four candidates for the position of Executive Director of the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission and may select the final candidate.

The interviews will be conducted during executive session consistent with RCW 42.30.110(1)(g). The portion of the meeting in which the Commissioners discuss and compare the candidates and vote on the finalist will be open to the public.

**The Chair** announced that there will be four executive sessions. The purpose of the executive sessions will be to interview the four candidates that were selected for the final process. The Commissioners can only discuss the relative strengths and qualifications of the particular candidate in the executive session and cannot compare them with other candidates or processes. Any discussion in regard to comparing candidates, or any sort of vote or discussion, must be done in open session after all four interviews.

The anticipated schedule for the day is: executive session one from 9 to 10 AM, executive session two from 10:30 to 11:30 AM, executive session three from 12:30 to 1:30 PM, and executive session four from 2 to 3 PM. The Commissioners will receive the written materials from each candidate for review approximately 30 minutes before their scheduled interview. The Commissioners will have a working lunch beginning at 11:30 AM until 12 PM. The open session will begin at 3 PM, which will be open to the public and media may be present.

Should the Commission select a candidate for the position of Executive Director, their employment would be contingent on a background investigation. It was suggested that the WSCJTC hire a firm that specializes in that sort of process.

**The Chair** reminded the membership of the next quarterly meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, March 14 at 1 PM.

**Mr. Baxter** stated that he invited the candidates to request any information they felt they may need for the interview process. All four candidates made extensive requests for

information (e.g. annual reports, budgets, strategic plans, organizational charts, customer lists).

**The Chair** stated that there are no specific interview questions for the candidates, as this is an executive, exempt position that serves at the pleasure of the Commission and does the work as directed by the authority of the Commission in statute. The Chair added that he would begin the process for each candidate by asking the candidate to introduce herself to the Commissioners.

**Mr. Baxter** added that some of the interview questions may be derived from the candidate's written exercise. The two questions each candidate will be asked to write a response to are:

1. Describe a process in which you dealt with a city council, county council, or state legislature that had authority over your budget and head count. What techniques allowed you to succeed in dealing with that process?
2. You have read the attached job description of the Executive Director; therefore, which two or three job duties seem to you the most important and what experience and preparation qualifies you to perform those duties?

The Commissioners went into recess at 8:23 AM until 8:30 AM.

**The Chair** called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. He announced that there would be a slight modification to the schedule, as the Commissioners will not only be in executive session during the four interviews, but also 30 minutes prior to review the written work of each candidate. Sonja will record the meeting going into and out of executive session. The Commissioners will come out of executive session from 11:30 AM until 12 PM for lunch and to take care of personal business.

At 8:32 AM the Chair announced that the Commissioners would go into executive session to evaluate the qualifications of the first two applicants for public employment.

At 11:36 AM the Chair announced that the Commissioners were out of the executive session and would be in a lunch recess until noon.

At 12:03 PM the Chair announced that the Commissioners were back in open session after a brief recess for lunch. The Commissioners will go back into executive session to evaluate the qualifications of the final two applicants for public office. The Commissioners will resume open session at 3 PM.

At 3 PM the Chair announced that the Commissioners were in open session and excused Commissioner Laughlin. WSCJTC employees and guests joined the Commissioners in the public meeting.

**The Chair** stated that the Commissioners interviewed four excellent candidates for the position of Executive Director of the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission. The four candidates were: Debbie Mealy, Sue Rahr, Susanne Isham, and Melanie De Leon.

***Commissioner Anderson made a motion for the Commission to offer employment to Sheriff Sue Rahr. Commissioner Newlin seconded the motion.***

**Commissioner Hohenberg** stated that this is a difficult position to fill and there were four excellent candidates. We are looking for someone who can lead a complicated organization and work with chiefs and sheriffs while also serving as an advocate with the Legislature. All four candidates were well qualified, but Interim Director Mealy and Sheriff Rahr stood out.

**The Vice Chair** said that he concurs with Commissioner Hohenberg in that we are facing some unprecedented times and unprecedented challenges in terms of budget. We need someone who is very in-depth in dealing with the Legislature, in educating the Legislature, and in educating the Governor's office as to what our essential requirements are.

**Commissioner Hohenberg** stated that one of the things that stood out about Sheriff Rahr is the combination of having a strong law enforcement background, a strong education, and the ability to build relationships with diverse work groups including elected officials. Based on this, Sheriff Rahr is his number one candidate.

**The Chair** recognized the outstanding work of Debbie Mealy over the past five years as well as during the past five months as Interim Executive Director. However, with the House budget proposal that broke earlier in the week we are in a crisis mode; therefore, those types of relationships are very important. Working with Sue, and watching her in action, she has that ability. Where we are today is different than where we were last week. On the same token, Sue recognizes what Debbie brings to the table and having someone the caliber of Debbie Mealy as Deputy Director with Sue is a dynamic duo.

**Commissioner Lucas** recognized Sue Rahr's leadership at the local, state, and national levels.

**Commissioner Anderson amended her motion so that the Commission is offering employment to Sheriff Rahr pending a background investigation. Commissioner Newlin seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Commissioner Stidham** inquired about the salary.

**The Vice Chair** stated that someone very qualified needs to be hired, and Sheriff Rahr has the confidence of the full board. State salaries are frozen until 2013; therefore, whoever is selected will have their salary until 2013.

**The Vice Chair made a motion to pay Sheriff Rahr the top of the salary range. Commissioner Hohenberg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 PM.

Written by:

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Sonja Hirsch, Executive Assistant

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Date

Approved by:

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Chief Jeff Myers, Commission Chair

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Date